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THE MIDDY ASHORE.

A FARCE, IN ONE ACT.

BY BAYLE BERNARD.

Dramatis Personæ.

[*See page* 10.

First produced at the Theatre Royal Lyceum, May 23, 1836.

HARRY HALCYON { the Middy Ashore	Mrs. Keeley. / Mrs. Fitzwilliam.	LIMBERBACK (a Legal Adviser)	Mr. Romer.
LIEUTENANT MORTON, H. M. S. Orion	Mr. Bannister.	MR. TONNISH	Mr. Oxberry.
TOM CRINGLE (Bo'son of the "Billy Ruffin")	Mr. Salter.	STUBBS (a Constable)	Mr. Ireland.
		LADY STARCHINGTON.	Miss Richardson.
		EMILY (her Niece)	Miss Shaw.
		ANNE (her Maid)	Mrs. F. Matthews.

SCENE.—A Marine Villa in Sussex.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—Fifty minutes

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MORTON.—

CRINGLE.—

LIMBERHA[M] ...d gaiters.

TONNISH.—

HARRY.—

LADY STA[FFORD]

EMILY.—[MRS. MORTON]

ANNE.—C[RINGLE]

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

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R.	RC.	C.	LC.	L.

*** *The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.*

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SCENE.—*Drawing-Room in a Marine Villa, elegantly furnished. French window to open,* L. C.—*Large glass,* R.

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON *and* LIMBERBACK, R. *with papers.*

Lady S. You must perceive, Mr. Limberback, what obligations have been imposed upon me. My brother, the admiral, dying so snddenly at Naples, leaving Henry heir to this estate, and Emily, a marriageable girl with a good fortune—it is my paramount duty to seenre her happiness.

Lim. Undonbtedly, my lady.

Lady S. To that end, I selected as her hnsband, a man of rank and fashion, the Honourable Mr. Tonnish; but with a perverseness peculiar to her age, she has chosen to become attached to a wretched lieutenant in the navy, who has been hovering about here for the last month for the pnrpose of running off with her.

Lim. The want of principle in some men is perfectly astonishing!

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Lim. Your ladyship would like me to remove the lieutenant to another post?

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Lim. To prove my alacrity, my lady, I will postpone my visit to a sick mother, so ruling with me is the grand moral principle, that to do a great right——

Lady S. Yes, yes.

Lim. We shonld sometimes do a little wrong. Good morning, my lady.

[*Exit,* R.

Lady S. So that point's at rest. This lieutenant removed, Emily can scarcely resist my efforts for her welfare, and yet this relieves me of but half my burthen. Henry, whom I expect home this morning from his ship, has modelled himself, I hear, so completely on his father, that the gentle boy, who left me three years since, has been transformed into a boisterous sea-gull.

Enter TONNISH, *yawning,* L.

Ton. Good news, Lady S.—your nephew has arrived—a faithful picture of his element in motion.

Lady S. Ah, Mr. Tonnish, you know not what nneasiness this circumstance has given me! I am told he has become so perfectly marine as to be totally unfit to mix in good society.

Ton. How *tiar*some!

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Ton. My dear Lady S., to teach him all I know will be the easiest thing imaginable.

Har. (*Without,* L.) Fair weather—villa ahoy!

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Har. (*Singing.*) "Here's the wind that blows, and the ship that goes, and the lass that loves a sailor."

HARRY HALCYON *runs in,* L., *and hugs her.*

Ah, my dear aunt!

Lady S. Henry!

Har. After three years' absence, lord, yonr face is as welcome to me as the sky after a sqnall. (*Tonnish gets to* R.) Some change in me, eh? something like a man now, aunt? bnt you are just the same. When I look at you I can't see a wrinkle—hem! I mean a dimple, that's altered. Well, aunt, so poor father has cut his cable at last—yon can't think how melancholy I have been with this black pennant on my starboard spar.

(*Pointing to the crape on his arm.*)

Ton. Starboard spar!

Lady S. (*Aside to Tonnish.*) You see, 'tis just as I feared.

Har. But 'tis no use repiniug—every mess is numbered, from the captain's to the cook, and father's berth above, I'm sure must be a good one—so cheer up, aunt, I have come on shore to make you happy.

Lady S. (*Aside.*) Dear, dntiful child, he's as plastic as wax. Henry, do you forget Mr. Tonnish?

Har. Mr. Tonnish! (*Crossing to him, and shaking his hand eagerly.*) Well, may I never get a ship if I knew you. Ah, do you remember the life I and Emmy used to lead you in Berkshire? when we turned your dress pumps into a line of packets on the pond—ha, ha!

Lady S. Ha, ha, ha!

Ton. Ha, ha! (*Aside.*) How very tiresome!

Har. But aunt, where's Emily?

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COSTUME.

MORTON.—Blue body coat, metal buttons, blue trousers, white waistcoat.

CRINGLE.—Pea jacket, blue trousers and waisteoat, glazed hat.

LIMBERBACK.—Broad tailed black coat, light waisteoat, nankeen trousers and gaiters.

TONNISH.—Extravagantly fashionable dress of the day.

HARRY.—Middy's jacket, light waisteoat, blue trousers, hat with cockade.

LADY STARCHINGTON.—Grey silk dress and turban.

EMILY.—Morning dress.

ANNE.—Coloured muslin dress and cap.

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oless you, they all looked up to me! in a month, the bo'son said I was the most popular young gentleman on board.

Lady S. Then they do call you young gentlemen?

Har. Oh, yes, they call us all young gentlemen.

Lady S. Well, that's a politeness I didn't give them credit for.

Har. In port, you know, I had plenty of amusement. Balls, plays, and concerts; and at sea, what with yarns upon deck, games in the mess-room, and a glass always in my hand.

Lady S. A glass always in your hand?

Har. A telescope. It was my turn, sometimes, to take the ship's courses, and I was always very regular. I kept a log.

Lady S. A what?

Har. A log—a journal.

Ton. Oh, then on board ship you call a book a log?

Har. Here it is. (*Taking it from his breast.*) Now I'll just read you, aunt, my mems of a day on shore. (*Reads.*) "10 a.m., rose, rigged, and took an observation of the weather, weighed for the street, saw ahead the Port-admiral's daughter, rated at sixteen, stood in chase, foot slippped, and capsized in a kennel, home to refit, hoisted a new flying jib—weighed for dinner, received at the admiral's with a general salute, came to anchor by the female craft, moored on the mother bank, baled out soup, shipped fish, exchanged shots with a sixty-four, hauled off to the ladies, formed a line for a dance, crowded sail down the middle, stood on the wrong tack and went bump ashore on an invalid's toes. 1 a.m., weighed for home, weathered the door, dowsed the glims, turned in."

(*Crosses to* L.)

Lady S. (*To Tonish.*) Did you ever hear such inexplicable jargon? Was this your only amusement?

Har. Not my only one—you know I have something of a pipe—and come what would, fair weather or foul, I could always keep myself in temper with a tune—nay, I could sing a second to the wildest wind that whistled! This made me the ship's favourite. When pay day approached, I used to regale my Jacks aloft with—(*Sings.*)

Will you go to Cawsand Bay, Billy boy, Billy boy?
Will you go to Cawsand Bay, Billy boy?
Will you go to Cawsand Bay?
When your pocket's full of pay—
We'll jig it night and day, Billy boy?

For the martial spirits of the deck on the eve of an engagement, I had the more inspiring strain (*Sings.*) "England expects that every man this day will do his duty." While to the poor lieutenants, whose hearts had been raked by the black eyes of Portsmouth, who was so welcome on a summer night's watch with the only English lullaby of the ocean rover. (*Sings.*) "All in the Downs the fleet was moor'd."

Lady S. (*To Tonish.*) The son of an admiral piping himself into popularity! And pray, my dear, amidst this diversified group who were your favourites?

Har. I had but one—

Lady S. The captain?

Har. His superior in heart.

Lady S. And this person?

Har. I have brought with me.

Lady S. Where is he?

Har. Waiting for signals.

Lady S. My dear child, why didn't you ask him in?

Har. (*Running to* L., *and calling through his hand.*) Tom Cringle, ahoy!

Lady S. Now, I suppose, we shall see a specimen of a nautical gentleman.

Enter TOM CRINGLE, L., *with a trunk under each arm, a hammock on his back, a spy glass, and a speaking trumpet.*

Har. Dear aunt, a faithful servant of my father's—a true cocoa nut, for with a rough shell he has a very sound core. (*Aside.*) Now, Tom, show your graces.

Tom. (*To Harry.*) You'll clap a hand to the windlass, Master Harry, if I gets aground? My humble sarvis to you, marm—my name's Mr. Tom Cringle, late bo'son of his Majesty's ship, the Billy Ruffin. I've been in the admiral's sarvis ever since I warn't no bigger than a pound of pigtail, and when, worse luck, he come to be as old as your ladyship——

Lady S. Sir!

Har. (*Aside to him.*) Tom, Tom, breakers.

Tom. Oho! helm down—I begs pardon, my lady, I means to say when he comed to lay up in ordinary—"Tom," said he, to me, "though I'm going to creep ashore like a crab, do you keep an eye on the son of your old friend."—"Admiral," said I, wringing his noble fin for the last time, "I'll stick to him like 'parseverance to a fine commander,'" Soon after that he went down, my lady; and when I seed Master Harry piping his eye, I says to him, "Come, come, Master Harry, if you gives in, who'll be left to comfort your poor old superannyvated aunt?"

Lady S. Henry!

Har. (*Smothering a laugh.*) Tom!

Tom. Ashore agin—well, I axes pardon, marm, I means no offence—I—(*Takes out his tobacco-box.*) Does your ladyship do anything in this way?

Lady S. (*Turning from him with indignation.*) Fah!

Ton. What a hippopotamus!

Lady S. Henry, you don't intend to retain the services of that sea-calf?

Har. Come, come, aunt, you know there's a difference between a forecastle and a drawing-room—he's out of his element—water is *his* element.

Lady S. I should imagine *brandy!*

Har. Where shall he take my trunks?

Lady S. Anne!

ANNE *enters*, R.

Anne. Yes, my lady!

Har. Anne! what, the little curly-headed friend I left behind me! I declare, aunt, if you were not by, I should be tempted to exercise my marine privilege.

(*Crosses to* R. C.)

Tom. Fire away, sir—my lady won't be nice, will you?

Lady S. Sir!

Tom. (*Turning away.*) Well, I hates malice!

Lady S. Anne, show that man the way to your master's dressing-room. Is this all your luggage, Henry?

Tom. Yes, marm, and this here hammock's mine—if it's all the same to you, my lady, I'll *swing*.

Lady S. I should rejoice to see you.

Anne. This way, if you please, Mr. Cringle.

Tom. Thank you, my lass. (*Gathering up the trunks.*) Good morning, my lady—gentility was always the wogue on board the Billy Ruffin.

[*Exit with Anne,* R.

Har. But, aunt, I hope we shall dine early.

Lady S. At six, my love; I have invited a party of select friends to meet you.

Har. Well, that's very kind of you. Then I suppose I must go into dock?

Lady S. Dock!

Har. Mount another jib.

Lady S. Now, my dear child, am I a member of the Billy Ruffin? Can't you say "I'll go up-stairs and change?"

Har. Indeed, I can't; for my other coat has lost a tier of buttons.

Lady S. Here's a dilemma!

Ton. A coat without buttons!

Lady S. And friends so particular——

Ton. Let me reflect—I've a box of things up-stairs, and among them, now I remember, a coat of my younger brother, made for him when he yachted the Mediterranean in a delicate state of health.

Har. Well, now may I never know promotion if that ain't friendly! So now, Mr. Tonnish, let's run up and rig, then I want to weigh for the village, and find out all the old men and women who used to give me nuts and apples. (*Running to* R. *and shouting through hand.*) I say, you Tom Cringle!

Tom. (*Outside.*) Ay, ay, sir!

Har. Stand by the main braces to let all go.

Tom. Ay, ay, sir!

Har. Come along, Mr. Tonnish.

[*Drags him off,* R.

Lady S. Good heavens, what a nuisance! Why, the boy is a thousand times worse than I expected! Whilst that wretch is with him all hope of his improvement is abs d. I see my only course—he shall quit the house this very day—yes, when I go to Henry, my first words to him shall be——

Enter TOM CRINGLE, R.

Tom. The wind's shifted to son' west by sou', my lady.

Lady S. Indeed, sir, and pray what's the wind to me?

Tom. "What's the wind to me!" There's a speech for a lady!

Lady S. Have you anything more to say?

Tom. Lord bless you, marm, I've as many lines to pay ont as would moor a fleet. I've got to tell you what I think of the build and rig of this here house——

Lady S. You'll be good enough to reserve your criticisms for the ear they'll gratify—there's the door, sir. (*Points* L.)

Tom. Oh, then you'd like to hear my yarn in private.

Lady S. In private! (*Crosses to* R.) Hark you, sir—that my nephew should have brought such a porpoise into a decent family is his fault, but if you presume on that account to annoy its members, I shall order the servants to restore you to your element, the *sea*, by a very summary process.

[*Exit,* R.

Tom. I suppose that's what she calls settling a stranger comfortably. Well, well, poor soul, if people always will live ashore what should they know of good manners.

Enter ANNE, R., *with a letter*

Anne. I beg pardon, Mr. Thomas Cringle, but is Mr. Henry here?

Tom. Oho, the tender wants to haul alongside. Well, my lass, what's in the wind? You need not keep closed hatches with a *wally-de-sham.*

Anne. Here's a letter for him from a gentleman that's waiting outside. I don't mind telling you, Mr. Thomas Cringle, it's Miss Emily's sweetheart—and as he's forbid the house, this must go to Mr. Henry without my lady's knowing it.

Tom. What, would the old gorgon be wery wext?

Anne. Oh, very.

Tom. Then I'm good-natured.

(*Takes it.*)

Anne. But it will be quite safe in your hands?

Tom. Safe! why, I have had a whole ship's company in my hands.

Anne. Deary me!

Tom. I say, my lass, do you like anything what comes from the sea?

Anne. Dearly!

Tom. Does you? Come, here's something civilised at last! and what sort of Jack do you like best?

Anne. One that weighs about four pounds.

Tom. What?

Anne. Bnt then I like to see him nicely dressed.

Tom. Oh!

Anne. My way is to cut off his head and tail, and fry him in oil.

Tom. Why, shiver me, you're a cannibal!

Anne. No, I ain't—I was born in Sussex.

Tom. Are you talking of a man?

Anne. Lauks, no—a fish!

Tom. A fish! ah, all comes of living ashore. Swamp me, if she could tell a dolphin from a donkey!

[*Goes off with her,* L.

HARRY *enters in his shirt sleeves,* R., *with his jacket and coat, a satin stock about his throat*—TONNISH *following.*

Har. So you think, Mr. Tonnish, that my appearance is improved?

Ton. Decidedly. I now should say you had all your life inhaled the atmosphere of St. James's.

Har. (*Looking in the glass.*) Now, if your coat will only fit me——

Ton. Fit! it must fit. My brother's habits were of an easy nature—they would fit anyone,

(*Helping it on.*)

Har. Now wouldn't you swear it had been built for me?

Ton. The fact is, you are a capital block!

Har. And how do I go under it? (*Walking about.*) Have I got rid of my vulgar sea roll?

Ton. Pretty well—pretty well. The whole secret of fashionable deportment, my dear fellow, is this—to be perfectly easy you must be tolerably stiff; you must combine an air of high life in the carriage of your head with the graceful flexibility of the man of travel in your lower limbs, as thus—

(*Walks about—Harry imitates him.*)

Har. I see—just as though your maintop had been carried away by a squall, and you had had the spar fidded.

Ton. (*Pausing a moment.*) Yase——

Har. Now, how do I make a bow? Do you call that Parisian?

Ton. Less stoop—less stoop, and a more negligent

bend. (*Bows.*) There, as if your whole frame was going gracefully to pieces.

Har. Like a wreck in smooth water. And at table I suppose I shall be able to take wine pretty well?

Ton. Oh, yes—when you've been at some tables you'll *whine* remarkably well. Now, really I must congratulate you on the change. I shall have great pleasure, when you come to town, in driving you round to my acquaintances.

Har. Well, now, do you know that's the very thing I want. I want to go to the opera with you like other people of fashion, and hear the singers.

Ton. Hear the singers! My dear fellow, you are very innocent. The opera is a place where people of fashion go to *see* the singers, and hear themselves.

Har. Well, you'll promise me one thing—you'll get me into a club in London, where I can dine when I like with a set of jolly fellows?

Ton. Jolly fellows? My dear friend, there are no jolly fellows at clubs, Clubs are places where men go on rainy days to stand in the windows to count the hackney-coaches. But rely on my friendship. When I see your aunt I shall have great pleasure in telling her that your improvement is altogether—decidedly—(*yawns.*) tiresome!

[*Exit*, L.

Har. I'm terribly afraid I shan't be able to go gracefully to pieces! (*Tries to bow*) More likely to go down headforemost, like an overloaded Indiaman. I wonder how I look when I'm going through my evolutions!

(*Practises before a glass.*)

LADY STARCHINGTON *enters*, R., *unperceived, and stands rooted with admiration.*

Lady Jane, I have the honour to be your most devoted (*Bows.*) Sir Charles, may I have the pleasure of taking wine with you?

(*Bows.*)

Lady S. (*With a burst of transport.*) Henry!

Har. (*Looking at her through eyeglass.*) Aunt!

Lady. S. Now I recognise my nephew. These clothes make a world of difference.

Har. The clothes, aunt? I thought the difference consisted in the *style.*

Lady S. And that is inherent in your mother's blood. You have now, Henry, had an opportunity of forming an opinion of Mr. Tonnish—isn't it your impression that his manners and sentiments are equally perfect?

Har. (*A la Tonnish.*) Why—really, aunt—ah—ya-as!

Lady S. Could I have done better than in proposing such a man for the husband of your sister?

Har. Why, really, aunt—ah—no!

Lady S. Yet what is her return? she has fixed her affections on a low, mean, wretched fellow, that I can't find terms to describe to you.

Har. Impossible!

Lady S. It's a fact—a man that would disgrace the family. This person has had the impudence to propose an elopement to her! Now, you must see, that unless some decisive step be taken——

Har. I'll shoot the fellow!

Lady S. My heroic Henry! I have but one more wish to make me completely happy, you will dispense with the services of that marine animal down stairs——

Har. Poor Tom!

Lady S. Henry, don't descend to the vulgarity of "poor Tom"-ing him. I must insist upon his going—but here comes Emily. Now, Henry, you will remember your sphere in life. An English gentleman, like an English officer, will always be faithful to his station.

[*Exit*, L.

EMILY *enters with the utmost warmth*, R.

Emily. Dear—dear Henry!

Har. (*Extending his hand.*) Emmy—

Emily. (*In surprise.*) My brother!

Har. (*Surveying her through his glass.*) Bless me! how you're altered.

Emily. And are not you?

Har. What is this, I hear, Emmy—aunt tells me you have been a very naughty girl.

Emily. And do you believe it?

Har. You are thinking of disgracing the family.

Emily. Henry, if you have ceased to love your sister, surely respect for her should teach you——

Har. Yes, yes, Emmy—but this is not a trifling matter. You should remember your station. You see how *I* am changed?

Emily. You are, indeed, when you can become a partner in a conspiracy against your sister's peace. Since this is the only reception you can give me, Henry—you will excuse me if I return to my chamber, and there in solitude remember that I had once a brother.

[*Goes off in tears*, R.

Har. (*Running after her.*) But Emmy, my dear—Emmy—she's gone; this lecturing is not so easy as I thought.

Enter TOM CRINGLE *with the letter*, L.

Tom. I begs pardon, Master Harry, here's a letter from a gentleman who has been telegraphing Miss Emily—somebody my lady has clapped under the non-intercourse act.

Har. Oh, the very pirate I wanted to overhaul. (*Opens the letter and reads*) "Sir, the emergency of the case must plead my excuse in thus abruptly addressing you. I have long loved Miss Haleyon with feelings that have been fully reciprocated." Here's impudence! Tom, fetch my pistols. "She has often spoken of you in terms of such affection, that I can't believe you are a party with her aunt to cause the ruin of her happiness." Better and and better! Tom get me a horse-whip. "But will you consent to afford me a few words, when I will give you any explanation you require. Edward Morton, Lieutenant, H.M.S. Orion."

Tom. Morton—why, he was with your father in the Ariadne.

Har. Is it possible? and have I been so eager to injure an honourable and worthy man, whom my country and my service teach me equally to serve. Tom, run to the beach and ask him to step here instantly. Stop! here comes my aunt. Now, I see an engagement a-head—you must lie to. Tom, and when you find she gets the weather gauge of me, bear down to my support.

Tom, Ay, ay, Master Harry, the right colours are flying at the foretop, after all.

(*Opens a window which leads to a balcony, and gets over the rails.*)

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, L.

Lady S. Well, Henry, what are your impressions now?

Har. That I cut a very ridiculous figure, aunt,

in trying to play a fine weather exquisite. So as I am ashamed of the service, perhaps you will permit me to dispense with the uniform.

(*Pulling off his coat.*)

Lady S. Henry!

Har. And this horrible French flag. (*Throwing down the coat.*) There, I've struck!

Lady S. The boy's mad!

Har. Then it's with delight at getting back to my old coat and feelings!

(*Putting on his middy's jacket.*)

Lady S. Have you dared to jest with me, sir?

Har. No, aunt, it's you that have jested with me. Didn't you say that Emily was in love with some wretched low person?

Lady S. Certainly!

Har. A lieutenant in the navy!

Lady S. What of that?

Har. What of that? give me leave to tell you, aunt, that I consider a man who risks his life in the service of his country worthy of the best reward his country can offer him.

Lady S. Here's a tirade!

Har. And also let me say, it's my opinion that if you abuse the lieutenants, you'll go next to the midshipmen.

Lady S. You are impertinent, sir.

Har. If you tell me of *station*, aunt, I shall talk to you of *order*.

Lady S. Do you dare presume?

Har. Now, my dear aunt, if you begin to scold, I shall begin to sing—I always sing in a hurricane.

Lady S. You impudent young Jackanapes—you smooth-faced dissembler!

Har. No, no, aunt, merely (*sings*) "A little sailor boy capering ashore."

Lady S. Will you hear me? you shall hear me!

Har. Certainly, aunt. (*Sings.*) "Blow high—blow low!"

Lady S. Hear your aunt's last words, sir!

Har. (*Sings.*) "Tom Starboard's last whistle!"

Lady S. Baffled—laughed at. But I will be heard—I command submission, Henry.

(*Tom Cringle at this moment puts his head over the balcony with a speaking-trumpet, which he claps to his mouth.*)

Tom. Seventy-four ahoy!

Lady S. Yah! murder! thieves!

[*She runs off*, R.—*Harry follows laughing—Cringle disappears.*

Enter MORTON, L.

Mor. What an hour of gnawing suspense have I passed! I have attended the summons from Halcyon. I have every cause to fear his aunt's influence, but I will not despair, lowering as the sky may seem, there is still a light that struggles through it, and that light is Emily.

LIMBERBACK, STUBBS, *and* MAN *enter* L., *unperceived.*

Lim. That's the prisoner—now, Stubbs, do your duty! If he resists, knock him down; and if he complains, tell him that to do a great right, it is sometimes necessary to do a little wrong.

[*He retires off*, R.—*They advance.*

Stubbs. Zarvant, sir! your neam, I think, be Muster Morton?

Mor. It is!

Stubbs. Well, zur, as I be rather short-sighted, perhaps you will be so good as to read this noat whilst I, in a friendly, respectful sort of way, lay my hands upon your shoulders.

(*Seizing him.*)

Mor. You rascal! What do you mean by this impertinence?

Stubbs. Bless you, sir, all the 'pertinence be in the paper.

Mor. A writ? at whose suit is this?

Stubbs. Young Master Henry's.

Mor. Impossible!

Stubbs. But it be! weren't he his old father's executor?

Mor. Here must be some mistake. Let go your hand.

Stubbs. Let go, when my duty be to seize thy Habus Corpus? Why, that's 'pounding' a felony.

Mor. Is there no help?

Har. (*Sings without.*) "On board the Arethusa."

HARRY *runs in*, L.

Lieutenant Morton, our acquaintance commences in a way that's rather odd.

Mor. Yes, sir, and as disgraceful as it's odd.

Har. Disgraceful!

Mor. It is not the usual character of an English sailor, to descend to the shore-going subtleties of an ink-fingered lawyer.

Har. Pray, sir, are you addressing these remarks to me?

Mor. To whom, but the person who could take advantage of an appeal to his honour and humanity, to increase a sufferer's misfortunes?

Har. My good sir, your love for my sister has unsettled your reason.

Mor. (*Showing the writ.*) This instrument is in your name, and for a debt which, I give you my honour, I believed had long ago been discharged?

Har. (*Looking at the writ.*) Well, how very odd—let me recollect My good man, did I give you this paper?

Stubbs. Noa, zur—Master Limberback!

Har. Limberback! oh, the old shark! now the channel's clear.

Enter LIMBERBACK, R.

Lim. Dear Mr. Henry!

Har. *Dear* Mr. Henry! (*Crossing to him.*) By what authority, sir, did you procure this legal harpoon?

Lim. (*Giving another paper.*) You will perceive, sir, by this paper, that it is but an ordinary civil proceeding.

Har. Oh, then you call sending a gentleman to gaol a *civil* proceeding? (*Reads.*) What's this? thirty pounds advanced by my father to release one of his officers from prison. This must have been a gift.

Lim. Pardon me, sir, by this evidence, simply a loan.

Har. Then, thus I tear up a document which impugns my father's character. (*Tearing up the writ.*) And in this very *rude* manner I put an end to a *civil* proceeding.

Enter TOM CRINGLE, L.

Tom. What's the matter, your honour—have you had an engagement?

Har. Yes, Tom, and here's a craft! (*Pointing to Limberback.*) You shall tow them out of port.

(*Throws him round*, L.)

Tom. Sha'n't I capture the whole fleet, sir? (*Seizing Limberback with one hand, and grasping the Constable's coat with the other.*) Now, you piearoons, heave ahead. I'll stick to you like persewerance to a fine commander.

[*Goes off with them.* L.

Mor. Mr. Haleyon, what am I to think of this?

Har. Merely, sir, that you've done me great injustice.

Mor. Of that I am conseious.

Har. You must give me satisfaction, sir!

Mor. Sir!

Har. I say you must give me satisfaction.

Mor. In what way?

Har. You must dry up my sister's tears before to-morrow—you must drive off your rival. Now, the way to drive him off is to eall him out. Do you fight him, and I'll seeond you—an affair of honour is just the thing I want.

Mor. You eannot doubt my readiness to win a prize like Emily.

Har. Well, then, my adviee is, Mr. Morton, that you go and write the challenge. I'll take care it shall be delivered; and if you will bear down in about half-an-hour, you shall hear all about it.

Mor. A thousand thanks, my generous friend. Emily's presence is a pledge for my activity. .

[*Exit,* L.

Har. Tom Cringle, ahoy!

Tom. (*Outside.*) Ay, ay!

TOM CRINGLE *runs in,* L.

Har. Well, Tom, have you sent ahead those pirates?

Tom. Yes, Master Harry, at fifteen knots an hour.

Har. Now, do you know, Tom, it strikes me there's a plot going on at home, against my sister's peaee, and as you and I have often had a masquerade ashore, I want you to get me a disguise. I want to go as a little beggar boy, and you as my poor blind mother.

Tom. Well, there's no difficulty in that—why, bless your heart, Master Harry! I've stood godmother to half the swabs in Plymouth.

[*Exit,* L.

INTRODUCED SONG.—HARRY.

[*Exit Harry,* L.

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, R. 1 E.—*her handkerchief to her eyes, followed by* TONNISH.

Lady S. Mr. Tonnish, don't attempt to eonsole me—the perverse, eapricious little villain!

Ton. (*Yawning.*) But, Lady S., I have made a diseovery I was not at all prepared for. I have yet a rival.

Lady S. Don't let that alarm you—this morning my lawyer had his instruetions to remove him, and I expect him every instant to announee——

Enter LIMBERBACK, L.

Well, sir, have you done it?

Lim. Yes, my lady, bnt I regret to say that Mr. Harry happening to eome in at the same moment, he tore up both the writ and the note, and set the prisoner free.

Lady S. What, sir?

Lim. And consigning me to the eare of his bo'son, I was in great danger of entering a dnek pond, because the latter contended that to do a great right——

Lady S. I shall go mad with vexation.

(*Walks about.*)

Lim. It is sometimes neeessary——

Lady S. I shall go mad, sir. (*Turning indignantly to him.*) I see the seeret of all this—this boy is tool of his sister. Henry has his weak points, and she knows them.

Lim. And don't you know them, my lady?

Lady S. None, but his absurd devotion to his father's memory.

Lim. Why, my lady, this seeret is inestimable—the father must assist you in your views upon the son.

Lady S. My good friend, his father happens to be dead.

Lim. The admiral could have written a letter during his last moments, tenderly enjoining Henry and Emily to submit to their dear aunt's judgment in all matters that eoncern her happiness.

Lady S. But how eould sneh a letter be proenred?

Lim. Long eonversanee with my revered friend's hand would enable me to imitate it.

Lady S. Well!

Lim. And aeknowledging the rule, that to do a great right——

Lady S. Yes, yes.

Lim. Unless some aeeompaniment were necessary to stamp its authenticity.

Lady S. Some gift——

Ton. A pietnre.

Lady S. I have no pietnre!

Lim. A loek of hair——

Lady S. I have no hair!

Ton. How tiarsome!

Lim. Yet both these things eould be provided.

Lady S. True! now I think of it, Anne has a loek of hair belonging to her father, preeisely the same eolour as the admiral's. I found it plaeed for safety in one of my drawers—she shall give it me.

Lim. That loek, my lady——

Lady S. Enelosed in your letter!

Ton. Yase!

Lady S. Stop, stop, we've overlooked the principal difficulty. Who's to deliver it?

Lim. The post!

Ton. From Naples—that will appear *far fetched.*

Lady S. Now, then, we are at a standstill.

Ton. Not so! I expeet my brother's groom by the Brighton coaeh. I'll turn him into the admiral's eourier.

Lady S. Dear Mr. Tonnish, now our seheme's complete.

ANNE *runs in,* L.

Anne. Oh, my lady! here's a poor little beggar boy and an old blind woman, who says she's got a sad ease to lay before your ladyship.

Lady S. Am I the overseer of the parish?

Anne. But, my lady, she says she has eome by Master Henry's authority.

Lady S. There, this house will be made a refuge for the destitute. Your young master is too good-natured Anne—shut the gate against them.

Anne. But they are here, my lady!

[*Exit,* L.

Enter HARRY, L., *dressed in a tarpaulin hat, canvas trousers, and ragged jacket, and* TOM *as an old woman, leaning on a crutch, and carrying a basket.*

Har. Come along, mother—here's my lady.

Good morning, my lady! this is my mother, Mrs. Mills, so please you; and my name's Joseph Mills, or as they call me about here, fatherless Joe!

Lady S. And what's your business with me, fatherless *Joe?*

Har. Well, I'll tell you, my lady, as soon as we have rested. (*Lady Starchington rises—Harry takes her chair*) Thank you, my lady—here, mother, take a seat!

(*Gives Tom the chair.*)

Lady S. Upon my word!

Har. You must know, my lady, my mother, Mrs. Mills, is a perfect lady, as you may see; and when she was young and pretty, she was a great friend of the old admiral's.

Lady S. What, sir?

Har. Quite true, my lady, there was something in her manners so very captivating; and so he said to her when she got married—"Mrs. Mills," says he, "if ever you should come to want, you go to Fair Weather Villa, and there will be a home for you!

Lady S. Indeed!

Har. So as things have gone badly with us this last month, my lady, I advised mother to do as the old admiral told her; and as we were coming here, my lady——

Lady S. You met an impertinent little jackanapes, who authorized your freedom. Return to your friend, sir, and say I beg to tell him——

Lim. (*Touching her arm.*) My lady!

Lady S. Did you ever hear of such an insult?

Lim. I never knew of one that could be better turned to more advantage.

Lady S. Advantage!

Lim. This person will be an important witness to our letter.

Lady S. Ah!

Lim. A few smooth words, and a glass or two of cordial, would mould her to your purpose. In the meantime, the letter can be prepared, the hair obtained, and every preparation made against your nephew's return.

Lady S. I see, I see—thanks for the suggestion—away, then, to your task, Mr. Limberback; and you, Mr. Tonish, send for your courier.

Lim. With all dispatch, my lady, since we both agree in the principle, that to do a great right is——

Ton. Demmed tiarsome!

[*Exit with Limberback,* R.

Lady S. Joseph Mills, my affection for my brother is a sufficient inducement to treat you and your mother with every kindness. Anne!

ANNE *enters,* L.

Take Joseph Mills into the kitchen, and give him something to eat—and do you hear—(*aside to her*) bring my ratifia and a glass.

Anne. The particular bottle, madam?

Har. Thank you, my lady—then I'll leave mother with you, you'll find she's quite a lady, though she's full of 'firmity. (*Aside to him.*) Now, Tom, mind your soundings! (*Bowing round to Lady Starchington—smothering a laugh as he goes.*) And as as for you, my lass, you shall find I am quite a gentleman, without a bit of 'firmity.

[*Kisses her, and goes out with her,* L.

Lady S. Mrs. Mills, I understand you have the misfortune to be blind?

Tom. Yes, my lady.

Lady S. But you are not deaf?

Tom. No, my lady—and I ain't dumb.

Lady S. (*Aside.*) I'll answer for it when your lips are moistened.

ANNE *re-enters,* L., *with a bottle and glass.*

Now, Mrs. Mills, you have walked some way, you are infirm—a glass of superior ratafia will do you no harm. (*Fills a glass and gives it—Tom drinks it, smacks his lips, and holds the glass for another.*) Another! I knew you would like it—it's been a medicine in our family many years. (*Tom empties the glass and presents it again.*) A third! (*Aside.*) I'm afraid drinking is one of her infirmities.

Tom. That will do, my lady.

(*Lady Starchington gives it to Anne, who exits,* L.)

Lady S. I should hope so. Now, Mrs. Mills, be kind enough to listen to me—I hear that in your youth you knew and respected my dear brother, the admiral.

Tom. That I did, my lady.

Lady S. Then you must desire the welfare of his son?

Tom. That I does, my lady.

Lady S. Would you be willing to aid me in any plan I could point out to secure that son's welfare?

Tom. Would I? shiver and sink me!

Lady S. Mrs. Mills!

Tom. (*Aside.*) Avast, Tom! I beg pardon, ma'am, anything you like.

Lady S. Briefly, then, I must tell you that Henry is at this moment the disturber of my peace.

Tom. What, my lady?

Lady S. I grieve to say it, but a more headstrong, wilful, undutiful boy never abused his friends' affection.

Tom. (*Pulling off his bonnet.*) It's a lie, my lady.

Lady S. (*Starting up.*) The bos'on!

Tom. Scuttle me!

Lady S. Thieves! murder!

[*Exit,* L.

Tom. My eyes! all this land-larking may be very well for Master Henry, but it doesn't agree with an old Jack. I've a good mind to ship a snooze—there's a chair there as good as a hammock—I'll bring myself to an anchor, and if Master Harry wants me he may hail me. (*Draws an arm-chair, and sinks into it.*) Now, easy—easy there! she grounds! ease off tye back stay! (*Drops back.*) Ay, ay! now she heels! square abaw by the lifts and braces! ay, ay, now stand by to let go your anchors! ay, ay!

(*Shoves out his legs, and drops back his head, asleep.*)

Enter ANNE, L.

Anne. Deary me! what can my lady want with poor father's lock of gray hair? I don't want to part with it—I keep it for luck.

Tom. (*Asleep.*) Ay, ay!

Anne. Who's that? Mr. Cringle, I declare! Goodness me! how sound he sleeps! and how—(*stretching over his head*)—how very *gray* his hair is! Just the colour of poor father's. I wonder if he's particularly attached to all of it. There's a little tuft on the top—I don't think he'd miss it; but stealing is a great sin, and I know I couldn't cut it off if I was to try. (*Holds up the lock, and feels with the other hand for her scissors.*) My hand trembles so! But then, again, I'm told to honour my father! I'm sure I can't do it—I shall cut his head. (*Placing the scissors to his hair.*)

Tom. (*Dreaming.*) Ay, ay!

Anne. Deary me! (*Dropping it.*) Is anybody coming? No! (*She cuts off the lock and brings it forward.*) I've got it! how my heart beats! Deary me, he's waking! I shall be found out—I know I shall!

[*Exit cautiously*, L. 1 E.

Tom. (*Waking up with a loud sneeze.*) Chish! Scuttle the shore, a man can't snooze for five minutes without taking cold—(*sneezes*)—aboard ship I never sneezed above twice in my life, and that was with gunpowder. (*Sneezes.*) Deep seas sink the land, I say—what's the use of—(*sneezes*)—it?

[*Goes out*, L.

TONNISH *enters*, R.

Ton. So, the grand result of Lady Starchington's scheme to establish my fortune is to put a bullet in my skull! I must go to town.

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, L.

Lady S. Dear Mr. Tonnish, congratulate me. Here is the letter and the lock of hair, which I have just obtained from Anne—could anything be more demonstrative?

Ton. Yes, Lady S—a challenge from my rival. Not that I object to fight him, but if I should get shot it would be so infernally tiresome.

Lady S. He will best be answered by an application to a magistrate. Let us lose no time in trying our experiment with Henry. Ah, here he comes!

HARRY *runs in*, L.; LIMBERBACK *enters*, R.

Har. Well, aunt, I suppose you mean to scold me?

Lady S. No, Henry, I have nothing more to say to you than that, whilst you have been amusing yourself with offering an insult to your aunt, a courier has arrived from Rome with a letter from your father.

Har. A letter from my father?

Lady S. Written during his last illness. I have not opened it—I had not the courage, for when I saw that superscription—the last words, most likely, ever written by his venerable fingers.

(*Turns away, and takes out her handkerchief.*)

Ton. (*Taking out his.*) How very affecting!

Lim. (*Taking out his.*) To do a great right——

Har. (*Reads.*) "My dear Harry and Emmy,—I cannot close my eyes without sending you my blessing, and begging, as you are both young and inexperienced, to be obedient to your kind aunt in all things. I make it a particular injunction that you, Emmy, will never marry any man that your aunt does not approve of. I enclose you a lock of my hair. Be a credit to your country, Harry." (*Dropping his voice and muttering.*) Heaven bless you! "John Halcyon." (*Taking out the lock.*) And this is a lock of his venerable hair!

Lady S. (*With a burst of grief.*) His venerable hair!

Ton. } His venerable hair.
Lim. }

Har. Then it's all over with poor Emmy. Father's commands must be obeyed. I suppose my sister knows of this?

Lady S. Not yet—but she's here!

Enter EMILY, R.

Har, Emmy here's a letter you must read. (*Gives it.*) It is from father; and when you have finished it I have something to show you.

Enter TOM CRINGLE, L., *sneezing.*

Tom, here's a letter come from father—written just before his death; and here's a lock of his hair. It must be a pleasure to see a relic of your old commander—look at it!

Tom. (*Staring.*) The admiral's! (*Feels his head.*) Who says so?

Lady S. The courier is in the hall that brought it.

Tom. If that ain't my top gallant lock, shiver and sink me;

Har. What?

Tom. Some picaroon has been shaving me.

Har. Yours, Tom!

(ANNE *has stolen on* L.—*falling on her knees beside him.*)

Anne. Oh, Mr. Henry, please forgive me, and I'll tell you everything.

Lady S. Anne!

Har. Speak—speak!

Anne. That hair *is* Mr. Cringle's, and my wicked fingers cut it off!

Lady S. (*Sinking into a chair with a scream.*) Yah!

Har. }
Emily. } Ha, ha, ha!

Tom. Oh, you young pirate! I knew I couldn't have sneezed half an hour for nothing!

Lim. To do a great right, I must preserve my person from annoyance.

[*Runs out*, R.

Ton. Mr. Halcyon, I am very sorry I should appear to be mixed up in this affair, but I beg to assure you that, much as I desire the honour of your sister's hand, I consider this attempt altogether—(*yawns*) decidedly—tiresome!

[*Exit*, R.

Har. Lieutenant Morton, ahoy!

Enter MORTON, L.

Mr. Morton, I am most happy to inform you that my aunt has, at length, done justice to your character, though she is too much affected at this moment to tell you so.

Mor. Lady Starchington, is this possible?

Har. She bids me say, she now consents most heartily to your union with my sister.

Lady S. What, sir?

(*Starting up—he waves the lock of hair.*)

Har. Ha, ha! his venerable hair!

Lady S. You little monster!

(*Sinking down again.*)

Mor. And now, what can we say to one who has made two desponding beings so eminently happy?

Har. Simply this—that as the Middy is still upon the ship books, and may soon go to sea again, he trusts that the vagaries of the night may not prevent his promotion; but that those who stickle most for the decorum of the service will bestow a lenient look on his "Caperings Ashore."

Disposition of the Characters at the fall of the Curtain.

MORTON. EMILY. HARRY. TOM.

LADY S. ANNE.

R. L.

MATTEO FALCONE;

OR, THE BRIGAND AND SON.

A MELODRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH BY W. H. OXBERRY.

Dramatis Personæ.

[See page 4.

First produced at the Theatre Royal, Lyceum, June 6th, 1836.

Captain Alezzio	Mr. Ireland.	Fortunato Falcone, son of Matteo...	Mrs. Keeley.
Corporal Nicolo Gamba	Mr. Romer.	Guiseppa, Matteo's wife	Miss Gilbert.
Matteo Falcone, Gianetto Sampiero, Brozzo — Brigands	Mr. Perkins. Mr. M'Ian. Mr. Sanders.	Soldiers, Brigands, Peasants, &c.	

In the course of the piece, the Tarantella will be danced by Mr. M'Ian and Miss Gilbert.

Time in Performance.—Thirty-five minutes.

COSTUME.

MATTEO.—Sheepskin jacket—brown breeches—brigand leggings.

GIANETTO.—Grey brigand jacket and breeches—calfskin vest—brigand leggings.

CORPORAL NICOLO.—Italian uniform—cocked hat.

CAPTAIN ALEZZIO.—Uniform.

FORTUNATO.—Sheepskin jacket—striped breeches—fleshings—brigand leggings.

GUISEPPA.—Blue short skirt—Italian flat cap—blue stockings—brown bodices.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R. RC. C. LC. L.

*** *The reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.*

MATTEO FALCONE.

SCENE I.—*A village in Corsica. Exterior of an inn* R. C., *2nd grooves.* SOLDIERS *and* PEASANTS *regaling.* MATTEO FALCONE *and* GIANETTO SAMPIERO *appear at back disguised as peasants, watching them. Table and seats,* R. C. *Matteo and Gianetto come forward.*

Mat. (*Aside to Gianetto.*) Gianetto, join the dance—it will prevent suspicion. I will sit at the table and endeavour to gather information from their conversation.

(*Gianetto takes a peasant girl, and they dance the Tarantella. After dance Gianetto advances to Matteo.*)

Gian. Matteo, you seem thoughtful.

Mat. I am meditating by what means I can frustrate the designs of these bloodhounds, and save my brave band. They muster strong—treble my number.

Gian. And your band outnumbers mine. United, they would make a noble front against these hireling gadflies. Let us stand together and make common cause against our would-be exterminators.

Mat. Agreed! (*Shakes hands.*) Should they attack you first, a lighted beacon from the Devil's Mount shall bring my men to your aid—the same signal from Monte Rotundo will summon you to my relief. I am known—in fact related, to the garrulous corporal of this party you saw just now—this fool I mean.

(*Pointing to* NICOLO, *who enters from inn,* R.)

Nico. Now, my merry men, don't fall out with me when I tell you you must fall in. The commanding officer is about to reconnoitre. A reinforcement will join us to-night at the Monte Rotundo.

Mat. (*Aside to Gianetto.*) Do you mark that?

Nico. I am sorry to spoil sport, but I must now give the last toast. Fill me a horn of Campoloro. "Success to our enterprise," (*They drink.*) It's a noble duty we have to perform—to free our country of these freebooters who infest our mountains, and who rob, plunder, and cut the throats of the peaceful inhabitants of the island. We'll hunt and exterminate the race of them from Cape Corso to Bonafacio. We'll march into their secret haunts, and hunt them out as ferrets do the rats.

Mat. (*Aside to Nicolo.*) Beware you set not traps to snare yourselves.

Nico. (*Alarmed.*) Ha, this is——

Mat. (*Shows stiletto.*) Your cousin!

Nico. Your cousin—yes, (*aside.*) curse the relationship!

Mat. (*Aside to Nicolo.*) Would you betray your cousin? You are the only person here who knows me—one word or sign and you're a dead man! You know me——

Nico. I have that felicity—(*aside*) unfortunately. And who is this man with you?

Gian. (*Picking his teeth with his stiletto.*) A friend.

Nico. (*Seeing stiletto.*) Oh, I understand.

Mat. Adio, cousin. Should you pass my mountain hut I'll make you welcome as a friend, but, for your own safety's sake, come not in that dress, or you may receive a warmer reception than you would desire. Adio, cousin.

(*Matteo and Gianetto are on each side of Nicolo—as they exeunt,* L., *they each show their stiletto.*)

Nico. Oh, good-bye, and good riddance—endangering my safety as well as their own! Should the commanding officer find out who they were, and saw me on such friendly terms with them, I should get shot as an accomplice!

Enter CAPTAIN ALEZZIO *from inn.*

Cap. We must commence our march. Fall in! To the Monte Rotundo—march!

[*Soldiers march off,* L. *Peasants form tableau.*

SCENE II.—*Mountain pass,* (*1st grooves.*)

Enter GIANETTO, L.

Gian. They are on the march! I will attack them—it will be unexpected, and my success is certain. They rush to their own distruction. Now to summon my brave band, and then like hunted boars at bay, in our turn attack our hunters.

(*Blows whistle—the* BRIGANDS *enter from* R.)

All. Hail to our leader, Sampiero!

Gian. Brave hearts! I bring ye tidings of the enemy—they are now on their march, they expect to find us here, they shall not be disappointed!

Brozzo. But our numbers——

Gian. What! do you quail?

Broz. No, courage is not wanting here. Still, will our strength compete with theirs?

Gian. They are here but to reconnoitre. They meditate no attack until they are reinforced to-night; ere that arrives I'll cut them to pieces. Falcone's band will aid us to beat back the reinforcement. To-night he leads his men to the Devil's Pass, there, should their numbers treble ours, their destruction would be inevitable. (*March heard without,* L.) Ha, they come! in the ravine we can conceal ourselves!

[*Exeunt* R.

Enter ALEZZIO, NICOLO, *and* SOLDIERS, L.

Cap. Halt! From yonder eminence we can survey the country round, and observe the hiding-places of these locusts. Corporal, how you loiter. Forward!

Nico. Consider my corporation.

[*Exeunt,* R.

SCENE III.—*Corsican view extending to the extremity of the stage. Bridge with mountains in the distance. Hut on* R., *and a hay-cock on the other.*

FORTUNATO *discovered, loading rifle.*

Fortu. There, my little fellow, I've given you your dinner ; some gunpowder which will do for a curry, and you can fancy the bullet a dumpling; and now you have dined, you must get *me* something. Father and mother won't come home for some time, and when they do it will be with good appetites. I must not leave the hut, but if a tit-bit of game should pass here within range of my rifle down it comes to a dead certainty, and then how father will pat my head, and call me his own boy—and how proud I shall feel to show him my prize; but I'm reckoning my chickens before they are hatched. Oh, how I love a hunter's life!

SONG—FORTUNATO.

When the morning sun smiles on the dew-spangled thorn,
The chasseur is rous'd by the merry ton'd horn.
Ye, ho! la, la, la, la!
The light-footed chamois o'er mountains we trace,
And with light beating hearts we follow the chase,
Through forest and wilds we merrily go,
And the mountains re-echo our ye ho, he ho!
Tral lal, lal la!
The chase being o'er our joys to enhance,
We partake in the pleasure that's found in the dance——
Ya la! la, la, la!
The sound of sweet music is heard from afar,
And we trip it away to the lightsome guitar.
To the merry tarantella then we advance,
And join in the sport of the heart-cheering dance,
Tral lal, lal la!

(*Gun fired without.*) Hollo, fire away! Somebody shooting in my preserves, I'll have a look out (*Runs to bridge.*) Soldiers! what's in the wind now I wonder? I wish father was at home. I'm afraid that—no, I'm not afraid ; father, when a wolf frightened me, scolded me, and said if I was his son, I must not fear man or demon. I am his son, and I won't be afraid; my rifle's loaded, and I'll give them a leaden dumpling if they touch me; but they won't do that, for they all are afraid of father.

(*Music, gun fired again*—GIANETTO *appears on bridge from* R. U. E. *and fires his gun, then runs down on to the stage.*)

Gian. Bloodhounds! your blood be on your own heads. I'm wounded, two of them out of the five have already fallen; curse on the wound, I could baffle them yet, would the blood but cease to flow. Ah! they are close upon me.

(*He comes forward,* L.—*Fortunato presents his carbine,* R.)

Gian. Boy, what would you?

Fortu. Not harm you—for you are wounded ; but I did not know but you might wish to harm *me*; so keep your distance.

Gian. You are the son of Matteo Falcone?

Fortu. Yes.

Gian. I am Gianetto Sampiero.

Fortu. I know, you, like my father, are chief of a band of——

Gian. Silence, babbler!

Fortu. Oh, I know, brigands never betray each other.

Gian. I am pursued, hide me, for I cannot go further.

Fortu. And what will my father say, if I hide you without his leave.

Gian. He'll say you did right.

Fortu. I don't know that, you don't belong to his band.

Gian. Hide me quick, they are coming.

Fortu. Wait till my father comes home.

Gian. Wait! I cannot, they will be here in a moment, hide me this instant, or I will kill you.

Fortu. You kill me? Why your carbine is discharged.

Gian. I have a stiletto.

Fortu. And I have a rifle loaded; and if you come near me I'll fire. Father is the best shot in the country—and he says, I shall soon be as good, so I'm not afraid of missing such a big buck as you.

(*Presents rifle.*)

Gian. You are no son of Matteo Falcone.

Fortu. Father would knock you down as flat as a pancake, if he heard you say that ; for he told me the other day, I was his own boy, and he was proud of me.

Gian. Would you see me arrested at your father's threshold? They will drag me to prison—load me with chains—and condemn me to an ignominous death.

Fortu. Would they? What cruel wretches! Well, now, what will you give me to hide you?

Gian. (*From his leather pouch.*) This is all I have.

Fortu. Five francs! fear nothing, I'll hide you ; here, creep under this straw—I'll sit upon you, and they won't find you.

(*He makes a hole—Gianetto creeps under, and Fortunato sits on him.*)

Enter CORPORAL NICOLO, *over bridge,* R. U. E., *with two* SOLDIERS.

Nico. This way he must have come ; two of our comrades are severely wounded ; this is the hut of Matteo Falcone, a cousin of mine—a very distant one, I hope at this moment—hey? why are not you Matteo Falcone's son?

Fortu. So my mother says.

Nico. Indeed! then you are my little cousin.

Fortu. Then you are my big cousin, I suppose?

Nico. Bless me, how you have grown?

Fortu. And so have you grown, quite a great gawky. Ill weeds will grow apace, as my grandmother says.

Nico. I must be civil, the urchin's father may be near. Umph! have you seen a man go by just now—umph!

Fortu. Umph! how could I see, with my eyes shut, fast asleep?

Nico. A man with a pointed hare-skin hat—sheep-skin jacket, and deer-skin breeches—eh?

(*He gives a comic description of Gianetto's dress.*)

Fortu. The padre went by this morning, on his old horse, Peter.

Nico. You little rogue, you're playing with me; tell me this moment which way Gianetto went, for he's the man we are in search of, and I'm certain he took this path.

Fortu. I've not seen anyone, I tell you.

Nico. It's all a lie.

Fortu. If you say that again I'll send a bullet through you.

Nico. I've a great mind to——

Fortu. No, you haven't.

Nico. Is your father at home?

Fortu. No; if he was, you would have been off long ago like a fly out of a mustard pot.

Nico. I'm glad he's not then. (*Aside.*) Why, comrades, look here—here are traces of blood upon the straw. (*He pulls the hay about where Fortunato is sitting—Fortunato raps his toes with gun.*) Oh, my toe! My gracious, you little villain! you have hit me on my corn.

Fortu. If you had not touched my hay, I wouldn't have touched your *corn*.

Nico. It's all nonsense, you saying you were asleep—our guns must have woke you.

Fortu. Do you fancy your guns make so much noise? my father's carbine is much louder.

Nico. The devil take you, little wretch! I'm sure you saw Gianetto, and for aught we know, may have concealed him. Come, comrades, let us enter the house, and see if our man is here.

Fortu. And what will father say, if anyone goes into his house whilst he was out.

Nico. You little villain, when I've given you a few blows with the blade of my sword, you'll speak.

Fortu. My father is Matteo Falcone.

Nico. Do you know, you little rogue, that I could carry you off to Bastia if I liked, and have you put in a dungeon with nothing but bread and water and clean straw.

Fortu. Eh; my father is Matteo Falcone!

Nico. (*Aside.*) I dare not quarrel with Matteo—and I dare not return without my prisoner. I've my doubts—I have it—I'll try the effects of a bribe; now, if you will tell me the truth——

Fortu. The son of Matteo Falcone never told a lie.

Nico. He's a regular chip of the old block. What would you say if I gave you something.

Fortu. I will give *you* something—advice; if you wait any longer Gianetto will reach the mountain, and then it will require a sharper fellow than you to catch him.

Nico. (*Takes out his watch which Fortunato gazes at with delight.*) How would you like to have a watch like that, hanging by your side.

Fortu. Oh, if I had, how I would strut about as proud as a peacock; and if anyone should ask me what o'clock it was, I should say, look at my watch; when I'm a big boy, my father will give me a watch.

Nico. What would you say if I should give you this?

Fortu. Give it me, and you shall see.

Nico. Upon one condition: tell me where Gianetto is, and it is yours.

Fortu. You are joking.

Nico. By St. Jago, I am not; tell me where Gianetto is concealed, and, may I lose my epaulette, if I do not give this watch—come now.

Fortu. Oh, bless its pretty heart, how it ticks—oh, what a duck—what a pretty chain.

(*He gradually gets it into his hand and seems delighted; avarice and the respect due to hospitality are forcibly expressed by Fortunato—he seems irresolute—returns the watch to Nicolo, sighs, but in a moment takes it back again, puts it in his belt, and beckons Nicolo forward, and points with his thumb over his shoulder to the straw-heap.*)

Nico. Ah, indeed—comrades, search that straw.

(*Music—they advance—Gianetto rushes out.*)

Gian. Maledizzione!

(*Attempting to seize Fortunato.*)

Fortu. I will give you back your five francs, there. (*Throws it before Gianetto.*)

Gian. I am wounded—I cannot walk—you must carry me.

Nico. I am so overjoyed at catching you, I could carry you on my back for a league without feeling tired; when we get to Crespoli we shall find horses.

(*They drag him over to* L. MATTEO *enters with his wife* GUISEPPA *on the bridge at back—he has two carbines across his shoulder.*)

Mat. Soldiers at my hut! what can this mean, Guiseppa? Fear not, we are a match for them.

(*Advances.*)

Fortu. Ah, here's my father.

Nico. The devil there is! I don't feel at all comfortable. If Matteo by chance should turn out to be Gianetto's friend, and should take it into his head to defend him—the bullets of his two rifles would reach two of us, as sure as a letter by the post; and if, in spite of our relationship, he should aim at me! I'll put a good face on it, and make sure I'll be uncommon friendly with him. (*Matteo cautiously advances, followed by his wife—Nicolo runs to meet him.*) What, my old friend, how are you again? hope you are well, my fine fellow—and what, Mistress Falcone! how charming you are looking. Young Fortunato has grown a fine little fellow, very like his father. This really is a pleasure I never expected; I am truly delighted to see you once more. (*Aside.*) That's the greatest lie I ever told—I wish they were a hundred leagues off.

Mat. What brings you here?

Nico. Eh? why, I—(*aside*) I think he's all right. Why, I've had a long journey over the mountains, and I thought I'd just stop and give you a call, according to your invitation—it's very fatiguing, don't ask me to dinner, for I can't stop, though I'm knocked up almost—mustn't complain, for we've got a prize—a famous prize—we have just laid hold of Gianetto Sampiero.

Mat. Poor devil! (*Aside.*) They have been attacked, then.

Nico. The rogue defended himself like a lion; he has wounded two of my comrades—one of them has his arm broken, but he's only a Frenchman, so it's of no great consequence. After that he hid himself so cunningly, that the devil himself could not have discovered him. I should never have

found him out if it had not been for my little cousin Fortunato.

Mat. and Guise. } Fortunato!

Nico. Yes, Gianetto was hidden under that straw heap, but my little cousin put me up to his cunning, and I promise you that both your name and his shall appear in the report I shall give in to the Advocate-General.

Mat. (*His feelings excited.*) Damnation!

Nico. Now then, we must march!

Gian. Matteo Falcone, thus I spit upon thy threshold—it is the house of a traitor. (*Matteo clenches his stiletto at these words, but looking at his son in agony, hides his face in his hands to suppress his feelings—Fortunato, who has entered the house, returns with a jug of wine which he offers to Gianetto, who disdains it.*) Keep off. Comrade, (*to Nicolo*) give me some drink—I would rather drink water from him with whom I have just exchanged shots, than wine from your hands, traitor!

Nico. Now, then, comrades, march—good-bye, cousin, good-bye, I'll call soon and stay a long while with you—(*aside*) not within a hundred years if I know it. March!

[*Exunt guarding Gianetto over bridge to* R. U. E. *Matteo leaning on his carbine, his eyes fixed on his son with a look of concentrated anger—Fortunato, with a troubled eye, watches him.*

Mat. You begin well.

Fortu. Father! (*Bursting into tears and kneeling.*)

Mat. (*In a loud tone.*) Stand back! How came you by that watch?

Fortu. My cousin, the corporal, gave it me for—for——

Mat. For betraying a fellow creature, wretch! (*He takes the watch from him and dashes it in pieces.*) Wife, is that boy mine?

Guise. Matteo!

Mat. Well, well, this child is the first of his race who ever proved himself a traitor.

Guise. (*Stopping him.*) What would you do, how wildly your eyes glare.

Mat. Let me alone, I am his father, leave me, go in. (*He locks the door upon her.*) Boy, listen to me: for gain you have betrayed Gianetto—you know the brigand's oath? whosoever betrays his fellow, must fall by the hand of his nearest kin, you betrayed Sampiero, *I* am your father—though the fulfilment of my oath may rend my heart, it must be—ascend you mount. (*He does so.*) Kneel and say thy prayers.

Fortu. Father, dear father, do not kill me.

(*Music.*)

Mat. My oath—have you finished?

Fortu. Oh, father, forgive me—mercy, I will pray to my cousin, the corporal, to pardon Gianetto.

Mat. Heaven have mercy on the.

(*He cocks his carbine, greatly agitated, and is about to fire at Fortunato, when a confused noise is heard—guns without.*)

Fortu. Father, do not fire, Gianetto has escaped, and pushed the two soldiers from the narrow bridge into the water, Cousin Gamba follows him—he turns upon him—has pushed him into the ditch. Gianetto is here.

(GIANETTO *enters,* R. U. E. CORPORAL NICOLO, *covered with mud, follows him. Fortunato stands between them, pointing his rifle at Nicolo.*)

Nico. Put down your rifle—what would you do?

Fortu. Save Gianetto. I betrayed him, I will now defend him.

Nico. Stand back, or I'll fire!

Fortu. You will, will you, you magpie! then, to make sure, I'll fire first.

(*He fires at Corporal Nicolo, who runs off bellowing over bridge.*)

Gian. Fortunato, I forgive thee—thy courage has wiped away the stain of traitor.

Mat. Then he is my son again! boy, boy!

Fortu. (*Kneels.*) Father!

(*Matteo clasps him in his arms.*)

Enter BROZZO, R. U. E., *on bridge.*

Broz. Sampiero, a reinforcement is now marching in this direction to aid the yellow collars—I have collected our band in the Devil's Pass. They think you dead, or a prisoner, your presence at their head would rouse them to revenge.

Mat. Sampiero, we will stand or fall together.

(*Whistles—Fortunato loads his rifle—the Brigands enter* R. *and* L., *and crosses to* R. 1. E., *Fortunato looking out, drum heard.*)

Gian. The foe advance, stand to your arms, at my signal let your rifles echo through the valley—conceal yourselves.

[*Exeunt,* R.

Fortu. I'll stay by you, father.

Mat. No, my boy, get into the house with your mother—away! we'll soon beat these soldiers back.

Fortu. Oh, father, let me stay, I'm not afraid—I don't tremble—I can load your rifle for you.

Mat. No, in I say—a stray shot might strike you!

Fortu. I care not, so you remain unhurt.

Mat. Brave boy—but in, on the instant, go.

Fortu. (*Shakes his hand.*) I'll have one shot at the rascals if I die for it.

(*Pretends to go, but conceals himself,* R.)

Mat. They come.

(*Conceals himself.* OFFICER, CORPORAL NICOLO *and Soldiers enter,* R. U. E. *Matteo and Gianetto with their party fire upon them. General fight.—Matteo is overcome—Fortunato discharges his rifle, kills the officer, and stands before Matteo. Gianetto has felled a soldier, and is about to kill him, when a soldier draws a pistol from his belt, and shoots him—the soldiers are overpowered, and surrender.*)

Mat. We have conquered.

Gian. (*Falls.*) Hurrah!—hu——

Mat. You are bleeding.

Gian. It is my death wound—my heart—revenge me!

(*Guiseppa holds the cross which she wears round her neck before his eyes—he kisses it and expires—tableau.*)

CURTAIN.

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